

Japanese. Perhaps some humane Mikado might make this book compulsory reading for those who too readily strike doctrinaire attitudes about the intellectual abilities of American Negroes and whites.

JAMES MAXWELL

## PSYCHIATRY

**Lidz, Theodore, Fleck, Stephen and Cornelison, Alice K.** *Schizophrenia and the Family*. New York, 1965. International Universities Press (London, Bailey Bros. and Swinfen). Pp. 477. Price 90s.

DO PARENTS BY their behaviour play any part in causing schizophrenia in their children? Or, to put the question in a more constructive form: if the children are by their natures predisposed to schizophrenia, can the parents do anything to reduce the chances of the disease?

The question is relevant because we know that heredity only accounts for a proportion of the causation of schizophrenia, and very little of the remaining proportion has been accounted for. Parental behaviour, possibly of a type associated with a schizophrenic diathesis in the parents themselves, is a factor which must be considered, along with others such as extrafamilial influences during upbringing (e.g. school and peer relationships), stress at the time of onset of the disease (e.g. unsuitable vocational or marital situation), and what Waddington in *The Strategy of the Genes*\* has called "intangible internal sources of variation" or "developmental noise".

To assess the importance of family upbringing, it is really necessary either to vary the upbringing experimentally (for instance by allocating "high risk" families randomly to a group given special training in child rearing and a control group) or to study children brought up apart from their biological parents. The former has not been attempted. The latter is fraught with practical difficulties in most countries, and only recently has relevant information become available. Karlsson reported in *The Biological Basis of Schizophrenia*† that children of schizophrenics brought up in foster homes are no less likely to develop schizophrenia than those reared in the schizophrenic milieu; and Shields in *Recent Developments in Schizophrenia*‡ has assembled evidence to show that the schizophrenia concordance rate for MZ twins reared apart does not differ much from that of MZ twins reared together.

In the absence of any definite knowledge, it is not surprising that widely divergent views have been held. The approach of Professor Lidz and his colleagues is of particular interest because it is so different from the mainstream of psychiatric thought in this country (although it has affinities with our Existentialist school). Extending the theory and methods of psychoanalysis from the individual to the family, they take the view that schizophrenia is a defence against an intolerable life situation, an escape into delusional beliefs, which however is not possible for everyone, but only for those who have been brought up in a family atmosphere of irrational thinking.

The object of their investigation was to explore the families of schizophrenic patients in depth, to see what sort of family psychopathology they could find. The probands were seventeen young upper-class schizophrenics admitted to the Yale Psychiatric Institute, and they and most of the members of their families had intensive investigation, in many cases weekly for several years. The authors must surely be justified in their claim that this is the most intensively studied series of families ever reported for any reason.

They found that practically all the first degree relatives were abnormal. Many were overtly schizophrenic, others were severely obsessional or alcoholic. As there was no control series of families, it is idle to speculate on why they found a very much higher incidence of

\* 1957. Allen and Unwin.

† 1966. Charles C. Thomas.

‡ Ed. A. J. Coppen. Royal Medico-Psychological Association.

abnormality than is usually reported. Perhaps most families, at any rate of schizophrenics, would yield similar results under such intensive scrutiny. On the other hand, it may be that colleagues who referred patients to the Yale Psychiatric Institute were aware of the interest in family therapy, and sent along cases in which they felt the whole family needed attention.

Not surprisingly, in view of the extent of individual pathology, the disturbances in family relationships were widespread. In fact, every family showed serious abnormalities in virtually every aspect of family life which was examined.

The most meaningful question that we can ask of the material is why the patients rather than their siblings developed schizophrenia. The authors' conclusions on this point are of great interest. First of all, opposite sexed siblings tend to escape because the influences which are pathogenic for sons do not always affect daughters, and vice versa. Then in half of the cases the mother had been able to provide proper 'mothering' during the infancy of the sibling, but not during that of the patient. In some cases, for one reason or another, the patient became the family scapegoat. In most families, it was clear that the healthy sibling had been able to escape the family situation in some way, either by leaving home early, or by remaining aloof. It is particularly interesting that this quality of aloofness seemed to protect from schizophrenia, since it is normally considered a part of the schizoid personality and thus associated with a predisposition to the illness; an interesting personality/environment interaction appears to be operating here. The ability of the children to escape physically from a disturbed family is evidently most important, and may depend to some extent on social class; in the studies carried out in 1910 by Elderton and Pearson\* on the effect of parental alcoholism on the children, one of the main findings was that the children of the affected families spent more time playing in the streets.

The book is a collection of papers, many of which have been published before, dealing separately with such topics as the fathers, the mothers, incest problems, "Marital schism and marital skew", "The transmission of irrationality". This format is probably responsible for some of the weaknesses of the book. There is, for instance, no attempt at a coherent exposition of the families, and only a very imperfect account can be obtained by skipping from paper to paper with the aid of the index. We are told that the view of the families tended to change greatly as the years of investigation progressed; for those of us who have to be satisfied with a brief appraisal of patients and their families, it would have been useful to know at which stage of investigation the various pieces of information were obtained. About the agreement between the accounts of different family members there is little information, nor has much attempt been made to measure, or even to describe systematically, the various types of family interaction. But by far the most disappointing thing about the book is the scanty nature of the raw data. There is an abundance of theoretical discussion, illustrated in an anecdotal manner from the case reports; but the data is insufficient for the reader to satisfy himself about the validity of the authors' conclusions, let alone to test his own hypotheses. We might have expected the case histories of the probands and a description of the families to come out in a second volume, were it not for the despairing statement, "we are turning . . . to other related studies not because we have exhausted the data but because it has exhausted us, and it is time for us to be finished with it".

These future studies are described in the last chapter. The main one is a longitudinal study of families who have a high risk of producing a schizophrenic offspring. This research requires the identification of such high risk families, and the group is at present concerned with the development of tests such as the Object Sorting Test to perform this function. Four papers describing preliminary work along these lines are included in the present volume and the methods look promising.

Regardless of the final answer to the question posed at the beginning of this review,

\* *Eugenics Laboratory Memoirs*, Vol. X.

work with the families of schizophrenics is of great importance. The present tendency is to encourage schizophrenics to live at home rather than in hospital. This inevitably puts a great strain on their families, and it is vital that we should increase our knowledge of how the parents may be helped to manage their sick and probably very difficult children. The subject of the schizophrenic and his family has recently been most ably reviewed.\*

JOHN PRICE

### ANIMAL BREEDING

**Lerner, I. Michael and Donald, H. P.** *Modern Developments in Animal Breeding*. London and New York, 1966. Academic Press. Pp. xi+294. Price 63s.

MICHAEL LERNER HAS, already, a substantial reputation as an author and when it became known that he was collaborating with Hugh Donald to write another book on animal breeding there was pleasurable anticipation as to the results that this association of Berkeley and Edinburgh would produce. It is unlikely that many who have been awaiting this book will be disappointed, because it represents such a highly successful attempt to relate the theory of animal breeding to its practice. More than this, the relationship is achieved in a context of the demands that are now being made on agricultural science and technology to meet the increasing pressure on world food supplies. The economic and social perspective that has been created gives this book a very different character from that of any other that has been written on animal breeding and the consequence is that it is going to be especially valuable reading for students of animal science. It is true that they will get more genetic theory from other books but it is unlikely that they will find reading which will give them a better sense of the challenge that faces them in their professional careers.

There is another group which will also benefit from reading this book; it consists of those who have a responsibility in framing policies in animal breeding, government officials, for instance, livestock authority employees and members of breed society councils. One of the useful features of the book is that it is written in such a way that Part II, which relates to the theory of animal breeding, can be skipped by those who lack the training necessary for its full comprehension, without detriment to their understanding of subsequent chapters which are primarily concerned with the practice and future of animal breeding.

It is interesting in this connection that members of the British Cattle Breeders Club were advised to read Chapters 5-7 to provide a background for the discussions at their recent winter meeting. It is to be hoped that they all read Chapter 7 for it is such a well-balanced account of the functions and failings of breed associations and of the possible parts they can play in future developments of animal breeding. Certainly it is a critical account but it is not written in a manner to give offence, even to the reactionary unless he is completely lacking in a sense of logic.

There is at least one very interesting statistic in the book. It takes 625 lb. of algae to make 1 lb. of Eskimo with a loss in the attenuated food chain of 99.84 per cent of the original available energy. It is possible that this figure compares favourably with that for the grass-beef-human chain when one takes in account all the breeding overheads in specialized beef production. One wonders, when there are 5,000,000,000 mouths to be fed, whether we will be able to afford the luxury of anything but by-product beef. Certainly the prospect for the year A.D. 2000 is a grim one unless we really get down to the twin tasks of family limitation and more efficient land use. This book makes a very worthwhile contribution to the second of these tasks in giving a balanced account of the breeding problems that are associated with the development of more efficient livestock systems. It is bound to be widely read throughout the English speaking world.

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\* Brown, G. W. 1967. In *Recent Developments in Schizophrenia* (Ed. A. J. Coppen). *Ibid.*